



Estimado Representante Luxenberg, Senadora Moore y miembros del Comité de Vivienda.

My name is Victoria Ramos, I'm a member of the Hartford tenant's Union and Make the Road CT, I am testifying in support of a rent cap and in support of SB 4, with changes to better protect tenants.

I'm one of the many residents hurt financially by the rent increase. My neighbors and I experienced a threat of displacement last year after our building sold out to a new owner who was using a private property equity loan and using our money to fix the emptiest apartments, to raise the rent by more than 50% in some cases. We used all resources available to us to find justice, but we barely found it. Since I was a child I experienced being homeless, and I'm trying for my son not to have the same experience. I had been failed by the institution's system more than once this past year, but I'm here stronger than ever, to fight for my mine and my son's and neighbors' rights. During the summer of 2022, the new landlord tries to increase our rent without renewing our lease, because he wants to evict all of us at some point, he has already evicted most of my neighbors and I know I'm next if living conditions don't improve. Housing is a human right and isn't for profit. That's why I'm here because I want to support the law SB 4 for rent stabilization, as right now there is no law against rent increases in CT, how much and how often. During 2022 75% of the eviction notices were for lapse of time, and the people who benefited from this were slum landlords who increment the rent taking advantage of the lack of law in CT. Kicking people out on the street because they want to make more profit with new tenants paying for it and old tenants getting evicted.

I'm tired of hearing the same old excuses for everything. Many of you say that there is no housing crisis, but more than half of CT has been bought by large corporations, and they do nothing but increase rent and force us the Hard working people to leave in deplorable conditions and in constant stress. They make it more difficult to find affordable housing or to be able to buy our own homes. Put yourself in the shoes of the working people of CT who do not earn much. Every year tenants and residents pay so many taxes to have to live without housing stability due to the high costs of rent while big corporations get too many tax breaks and benefits from the state. Where are our housing rights? I do not see them. I see how big corporations get rich off of

us. Pass this law with amendments so I know I matter as a tenant and as a person of CT and the future of our CT residents.

The claim that rent stabilization impacts housing quality is false. Maintenance has always been an issue for renters long before this policy and will continue to be one that needs to be addressed with other complementary policies. What I do know is that having good cause and rent stabilization protections will mean that I can ask for repairs with the safety and security of knowing that my landlord can't displace me (by increasing my rent or evicting me) for asking. Knowing that I'm protected means that I can advocate for my right to safe and habitable housing without fear of retaliation.

Recent polling data indicates 72% of CT voters support a 2.5% annual cap on rent increases. I strongly support a rent cap, but SB 4 would be stronger to help us the tenants, the cap should be lower than 2.5 or 3% annually. It should cover apartments in between tenants so landlords can't push out tenants to increase the rent and it should expand good cause eviction protections to cover all tenants so we all have greater stability in our homes.

Sincerely,

Victoria Ramos

Hartford, CT